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Christianity and Society

POLITICAL PROBLEMS ON THE CONTINENT AND
THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH

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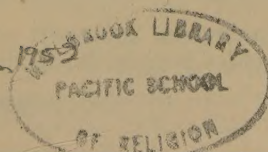
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ture history. The left wing Social Gospel, in its few remnants, is caught in the tawdry politics of Stalinism.

But whatever the defects of the Social Gospel, one must be grateful for its insights compared to the new menace of a degenerated pietism which is seeking to enslave the conscience of the Christian church and force it to speak in the accents of the National Association of Manufacturers. Thus Daniel Poling, once the international leader of the Christian Endeavour (perhaps still so if there is still a Christian Endeavour), challenges the World Council of Churches because it is too "confused" to understand the merits of American capitalism. James Fifield has long conducted his "Spiritual Mobilization" campaign in which the hosts of Christ are summoned to do battle against "statism" and the liberty of the Gospel is identified with "free enterprise."

More recently a weekly newspaper entitled "Christian Economics" with some very respectable names on its masthead, has developed the same theme, adding a venomous reactionary note on foreign policy which seems to come out of the mouths of George Sokolsky and Fulton Lewis, Jr. Norman Vincent Peale, who long ago reduced the Christian Gospel to the dimension of a soporific for tired business men and a promise of success for aspiring ones, recently challenged the Christian church to "come out for capitalism." His *Reader's Digest* article, in the hands of many members of the business world, has been used as an instrument of pressure upon ministers in local communities. Why, ministers have been asked by local leaders, do they not follow Dr. Peale's example and assure their flocks that capitalism is the truly Christian answer to the world's problems?

In this situation it has become important to gather, organize, and inform that portion of the Christian church in America which has a real concern for the integrity of the church and for the truth of the Gospel and is anxious to prevent the always dangerous mixture of religious

sanctity with the moral complacency of a culture. The peril of this complacency has grown immeasurably in America in recent years. For a nation as powerful and as fortunate as America is tempted to believe that the peculiar conditions of American life are the final standards of justice for the Kingdom of God. It is ironically tempted to this form of pride at the precise moment in history in which libertarian economic theory exists nowhere else but in America; and in which American practice is in sharp contrast to the theory. For we do have the beginnings of a "welfare state" which our religious and economic reactionaries describe as the first slip on the treacherous slope which ends in communism; and which is in reality our bridge between the conscience of the free world and the American conscience.

The Frontier Fellowship, which issues this journal, recognized some years ago that the issue of socialism versus capitalism was not the real issue on which the conscience of the church and of America is to be challenged. Socialism in its pure form is not a live issue in America. For that matter, orthodox socialist doctrine is almost as irrelevant in European political life as in America, even though socialist parties have a power in Europe which they never achieved in America. The issue in America is the right and the duty of democratic society to achieve economic justice under the conditions of a technical society. That task cannot be performed if the conscience of a nation is confused by either of the contrasting dogmas which have brought a civil war into western civilization. The one dogma is that the free play of economic forces will automatically make for justice. The other is that the socialization of property inevitably will lay the foundations for both justice and freedom.

In Europe Christian thought must resist both dogmas in the interest of a Christian realism which understands the perils to justice in all forms of power, whether economic or political; and which knows of the corruption of self-interest in all dreams of justice whether bourgeois or proletarian.

But in America our business is to challenge the bourgeois rather than the proletarian illusions. The latter do not exist. America is a bourgeois paradise which has been spared a class conflict of European proportions, not by its wisdom but by the fortunate circumstances of a constantly expanding economy on a vast and virgin continent. But there is danger that the bourgeois illusions about life and justice, which have long since been punctured by hard realities in European history, should reach monstrous proportions in our own land. There is danger too that religious society should give these illusions a final dimension of absurdity.

That is why it has become necessary to build and organize a movement of resistance of much wider and stronger proportions than the present Fellowship. This movement must not deal merely with the social and political problems of our day. It must be deeply grounded in the Christian faith and deal as rigorously with the religious and theological presuppositions of social policy as with the details of political and economic theory. The problem of achieving a more adequate organization of the forces within the church which believe in bringing the force of the Gospel to bear upon the idolatries and injustices of our civilization and of finding a better expression of our common beliefs, is so urgent that we invite any reader of these lines to write the editor, if he has suggestions of what may be done. Either the Frontier Fellowship should be enlarged and its instruments for reaching its members with significant material should be perfected, or a larger and better organization should be formed.

Unconditional Surrender

Mr. Winston Churchill's fourth volume of memoirs, *The Hinge of Fate*, contains reminiscences which throw a lurid light upon the frailty of the sense of justice in the heart of nations when they are in the heat of war. He reports how the disputed concept of "unconditional surrender" arose.

Foreign Secretary Bevin had taxed him in the House of Commons after the war with complicity in arriving at this notorious concept, which had stiffened the hold of the Nazis upon the German people and made both victory and peace more difficult. Mr. Churchill had denied responsibility. But upon looking in the records he found that both he and Bevin were implicated. For he had asked the war cabinet for authority to proclaim the policy of unconditional surrender. The war cabinet had demurred only to the extent of insisting that Italy, as well as Germany, be included in the formula. Subsequently however the formula was dropped from the joint statement of Roosevelt and Churchill after their conference in Casablanca. However Roosevelt blurted out the phrase at the concluding press conference, as he said to Hopkins, because "it popped into my mind." Churchill remarks somewhat illogically that "I do not feel that this frank statement is in any way weakened by the fact that the phrase occurs in the notes from which he spoke."

In any event it would seem up to this point that the fateful formula had been launched upon world politics by pure caprice. But Mr. Churchill goes on to explain why he did not disavow it. In the first instance he refrained because it was important to preserve the reality and every semblance of complete unity. But subsequently he stuck to the formula "because an alternative statement of peace terms, which was so often urged" would have contained "actual conditions" upon which the "public opinion of the three great allies would have insisted" which would have "been far more repulsive to any German peace movement than the general expression 'unconditional surrender'." Mr. Churchill confesses that these terms "looked so terrible when set out on paper and so far exceeded what was in fact done, that their publication would have only stimulated German resistance. They had in fact only to be written out to be withdrawn."

No confession of recent history reveals clearly how impossible it is for

nations, as also for individuals, to be "judges in their own case." Mr. Churchill subsequently explained the formula of unconditional surrender as meaning that "the victors have a free hand" and that they are "not bound to the Germans" but only "by our own consciences to civilization." But his previous remarks prove that the conscience by which they were bound was so clouded by the war's vindictive passions that the Germans would have been horrified to hear the peace terms. Let the pacifists make the most of this. Lacking a genuine world community this is how nations achieve rough justice through victory and defeat. The justice is very "rough" indeed. Obviously a victory for Hitler and tyranny would not have been a morally preferable alternative to this kind of justice.

The Saturation Point

Thank goodness the American public has revealed a saturation point in its tolerance toward advertising which makes base appeals to human pride and fear in selling its product. A television company recently displayed a large ad calculated to arouse parents to buy television sets because their poor deprived youngsters felt "lonely" and "inferior" in comparison with the neighbors' children who enjoyed this new boon of civilization. The advertisement struck a quick nerve in the public consciousness and conscience. One metropolitan daily was filled for days with dozens of letters from parents protesting against the vulgarity and falseness of the advertisement. Here, at last, the cult of the "American way of life" had reached its nadir.

Some of the parents protested because they were lovingly depriving their children of sets, having read reports that preoccupation with television programs was making serious inroads upon the educational standards of children; others felt that present television programs were too freighted with vulgarity to be wholesome for children; and others simply could not afford a set

and resented this kind of advertising pressure upon them.

A recent survey reveals that there are already seven million television sets in America. Nineteen per cent of the families in the higher income groups own sets and twelve per cent in the lower income groups. The high percentage of television ownership among the "poor" shows how television has been added to the automobile as a luxurious necessity in the American standard of life, in obvious competition with more basic necessities, such as home ownership.

One great question for the Christian church in America is how to speak effectively on the text that "life consisteth not in the abundance of things a man possesses." This text must be interpreted so that it will not be completely irrelevant to a civilization which is able to provide basic comforts and securities to all. There is no absolute line beyond which preoccupation with physical comforts and securities becomes a peril to the life of the spirit. But obviously there is a line which each individual or family must determine. It is the point where the gadgets of life become the end for which life is lived. We may not be as completely preoccupied with the gadgets as, say, our French critics suggest. Nevertheless American culture is in great peril from the achievements of American technical civilization.

The Poverty of Asia and Communism

It is one of the ironies of history that the communist creed, intended for the industrial workers of the western world, should find the greatest acceptance among the agrarian poor. The Russian revolution was possible because a small group of communists were able to manipulate the discontent of the landless peasants of Russia. They harnessed peasant support by promising land to the landless. Only later, after the instruments of political power were in communist hands, did they reveal to the peasants that land would be taken away

from them again and they would become "workers" in the vast "grain factories" of collective farms.

The political struggle against communism in Asia is steadily deteriorating because the various creeds of democracy seem to have less appeal to the landless poor of Asia than does communism. Meanwhile the final fruits of communism, its tyranny and coercion, are hid from Asian eyes, except as China gradually learns what communism means in practice.

The communist appeal to the landless poor seems particularly plausible precisely because it contains only a modicum of truth. The poverty of low grade agrarian economies is primarily due to low productivity. The most exacting system of justice would not give plenty to the people of Asia. There would not be enough bread or rice to go around even if it were distributed with perfect equity. In such a situation the injustices of landlordism and usurious interest rates are of course the more galling. But these injustices are not, in the exact sense of the word, due to "capitalistic exploitation." They represent pre-capitalistic injustice. Meanwhile Asia did come under capitalistic pressure. Its lack of technical power brought it into political subjection to western powers. This political subjection inevitably created national and ethnic resentments. But it may be questioned whether "capitalistic exploitation" added anything to the poverty of Asia. Certainly orthodox Marxism has tended to over-emphasize both the economic motives and consequences of imperialism. As regards motives, an "imperialist" of the type of Churchill was certainly more interested in the prestige of empire than in the cash nexus. It would be difficult to prove that the higher technical proficiency which Holland introduced into Indonesia, and Britain into India, and America into the Philippines increased the poverty of these colonial nations, though it must certainly be admitted that the technical tutors appropriated more of the increased productivity for themselves than a decent rule of justice would allow.

Developing technics did not raise living standards as much as they might have because there was "exploitation." Nevertheless the capitalistic exploitation did not approach the injustice of the landlordism and interest slavery which is the indigenous injustice of agrarian economies from the time of Babylon and Egypt to the modern day. But even the elimination of the traditional injustice of agrarian societies would not bring physical well-being to Asia. Its power of production is too low. Furthermore its birth rate is too high.

The development of a technical society is a long process, particularly if the society is so poor that it has difficulty in finding money for initial investment in machinery. What therefore is more plausible and satisfying than a creed which attributes all this poverty to exploitation? If, furthermore, it is attributed to "foreign" exploitation one may live in the illusion that "independence" will bring prosperity. The illusion must of course be finally dispelled by the facts. Some of the recently emancipated nations of Asia are now in the process of this disillusionment.

These nations are free of capitalistic exploitation. But their political system has not always proved strong enough to overcome the traditional exploitation. Thus MacArthur initiated a more thoroughgoing land reform program in Japan than the "democratic" government of South Korea was able or willing to enforce. In this situation of disillusion and despair communism preaches hatred of the "capitalistic imperialists" and tries to prove that our billions of Marshall plan and other aid are a part of this system of exploitation. Only a modicum of facts fits the theory. But the theory fits the prejudices of Asia, particularly its rightful resentments against the pride and arrogance of the white civilization. Clearly the spiritual concomitants of "imperialism," the pride and prejudice of the "masters" have been more evil than the economic consequences. These predispose the poor Asians to accept an interpretation of the causes of their economic condition which is 90 per cent untrue.

Our American culture is particularly unprepared to meet these illusions because it has too many illusions in the opposite direction. American technical efficiency is so highly developed and its natural resources so great that there is a tendency, even among "progressive" economists, to discount the whole struggle for justice in society and to insist that poverty must be cured primarily by production rather than by a constant moral and political examination of the wealth distribution of a society. Thus a pious and able Christian economist recently maintained in a *Christian Century* article that Protestantism should shed its uneasy conscience about our economic system and once more affirm its faith in the growing justice of a developing economy in which religion serves the primary end of encouraging the economic virtues. This mood now prevalent both in the business community and among academic economists brings us back to the moral complacency from which the "social gospel" rescued American Protestantism.

This is not merely a problem for American Protestantism, which once more is threatened with a complete identification of the purposes of Christianity and the "free enterprise" system. It is a problem for our whole nation in its relation to the

so-called "free" world. For the European part of that world is less convinced than we are that justice will inevitably flow from freedom, initiative and technical efficiency; and the Asian part of the world suffers from serious illusions which will not be dispelled by contradictory ones.

This is one reason why we should have less "Voice of America" in the air channels of the world. The voice is obviously too American. The Asian and European accents are missing. The identification of the "American way of life" with the good life is too complete. The connotation of the good life as a standard of living is too obvious; and the political theory is too libertarian. One of the greatest hazards to the development of a community of free nations is that the nation which has the economic power to be the center and organizing force of this vast alliance derives economic, moral and political moods and attitudes from its fortunate economic circumstances which are not as universally valid as it assumes them to be. If we could subordinate our moral and political prejudices to the moral consensus of the free world as successfully as we have coordinated our economic power to its political and economic health, the chances of survival would be more hopeful.

POLITICAL PROBLEMS ON THE CONTINENT AND THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH

By PAUL ABRECHT

Some of the Americans attending the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council of Churches reported a radical change in the thinking of Christians in Europe with regard to Christian action in society. They agreed that the passivism and the indifference to social questions characteristic of European Christianity in the period before World War II and even more before World War I had been superseded by a real desire to show the relevance of the Christian faith for the problems of society. They also stated that the old differences between Christian social thought in Europe and America were disappearing, and that at many points that of Europe was now more radical than in America.

As a general statement about the situation in Europe this interpretation is undoubtedly true. Christians in Europe have been forced by the upheaval in life on the continent during the last decade to re-examine the role of the church in relation to European life in a very radical fashion and to relate the church constructively to the political and economic changes which the people here must face. In most countries there are groups of Christians struggling to interpret for the churches the meaning of the turmoil and the disorder of the society in which they live. This does not mean that the Church in Europe as a whole is any more alive to these problems than the bulk of Christians in America, but the "frontier groups" are giving the church guidance and leadership in new directions.

The problems dealt with by such groups and the conclusions which they reach are frequently quite different from what they would be in America and this makes it difficult to force a comparison between the social witness of the Church in Europe and

America. The purpose of this article is therefore only to suggest some of the problems which confront Christians in Europe, to indicate the ways in which they are approaching them, and to point to some of the special difficulties which arise.

I. The Dimensions of the Social Problems of European Life

Politically, economically and psychologically Europe has not yet recovered from the last war. Too many of its social institutions were either completely destroyed or too badly crippled to be replaced in the past five years. This reconstruction in itself would be an overwhelming task but when it is added to the new difficulties resulting from the struggle between East and West the burden becomes almost impossible. Given the longing for the past and the uncertainty about the future it is easy to understand the indifference and pessimism which underly the thinking of many people. The problems of Europe fall roughly into three categories.

There is first the problem of national economic and political reconstruction. The countries of Europe have achieved a certain amount of physical recovery but they are far from being healthy and stable communities. In the most important countries there are violent conflicts about the right social policy to deal with the problems of unemployment, housing, higher standard of living for workers, etc. (Curiously enough, Germany is the one country which has tried to restore some measure of a free enterprise economy along the old lines. There are a number of reasons for this but the most convincing is that Germany is suffering from a psychological reaction to the extreme controls of the Hitler system

and there is a widespread desire to reduce the power of the state in economic and social affairs.) With many unsolved problems still before them the countries of Europe must now prepare for defense and the increase of already staggering taxes which that involves. There will be new inflationary pressures and a further reduction, rather than an improvement, in the plane of living. How can this be achieved without further aggravating the serious class tensions in many countries of Europe? Will politicians have the courage to tell the people the facts and will the people have the courage to continue the struggle? For many countries of Europe the answers are not certain. There is despair and distrust in the minds of all classes.

Moreover the solution of many of these problems depends upon the possibility of achieving in some measure the unity of Western Europe. Europeans sense that they must find a way to transcend their national and provincial patterns of political thinking and find new and creative ways to heal old national tensions and rivalries. Many of the leaders believe that the economic problems of the individual countries can only be solved in the context of a larger European economic community which can offer the market, and as a result, the degree of specialization in production and the lower costs which would permit an increase in real income. But how will this unity be achieved? Europe is not a single cultural entity but a collection of cultures, each with its own will to live and to perpetuate itself. What are the common elements, if any, in these cultures? How can a European community with a sense of responsibility for all its members be created out of such diversity? The enthusiasts for a federal Europe believe that this can be done. Some use as their model not the American federal system but the federation of the Swiss cantons and they point to the peaceful co-existence of the four cultures of Switzerland. But the federal structure of Switzerland has taken centuries to achieve. Will it take Europe that long? Does Europe have that much time?

Finally, there is the problem of a Europe divided between East and West. This division, which grows wider and more fixed each day, is a menace to a reconstructed and peaceful Europe. It can mean only further warfare in which European civilization will be obliterated. Western Europeans still have hope that in uniting they can also prove to the East that a United Europe is not necessarily an ally of America and an enemy of Russia but an independent force which Russia need not fear and which invites neighborly relations with Eastern Europe.

The possibility and the difficulty of solving these three types of problems encompass most of the hopes and fears of Europeans today.

II. The Spiritual Resources of Europe

It is difficult for Europeans to be activist in their thinking when they must face such insoluble problems, especially when so many of these issues depend for their solution on the decisions of powers and forces completely outside the sphere of European responsibility. How and where can Europe find new social institutions to replace those which the war destroyed and which undoubtedly had to be destroyed because they were inadequate to the needs of the people? How will she avoid becoming the battleground of a third world war from which very little that is Europe today may emerge undestroyed? Where will she find the resources to achieve a new sense of community which is her only hope economically and politically? Each of these questions must be answered and perhaps very soon. Any one of them is extremely difficult, and taken together they present such a staggering need for sacrifice, understanding and honest self-criticism, that it is no wonder thoughtful people in Europe are gripped by pessimism about the future of their countries.

The resources which Europe seems able to muster to deal with these problems are pitifully small. Spiritually, economically,

culturally, and politically the people of Europe are divided and confused. Class tension and conflict drain their vitality and anti-democratic groups take advantage of the weakness of new and inexperienced governments. France, the strongest power in Europe today and the potential leader in continental economic and political restoration, is in the greatest despondency and confusion. She has only slowly recovered from the sense of moral failure arising out of her defeat in World War II, and her people are divided into sharply opposing ideological groups. There is lacking also the practical understanding of the way in which social institutions work and can be changed.

All too frequently thinking about social problems begins with a discussion of a *Weltanschauung* whether it be Christian, socialist, or some other, rather than with an examination of the issues which must be faced. There is a static attitude toward social institutions, and a patriarchalism in personal relations which is based on traditional ideas about the way authority is achieved and dispensed. There is an astounding ignorance of the way in which social institutions work and how they affect the lives of people other than those in one's own class.

This is not to suggest that the problems would be solved by the importation of American sociology and American attitudes toward social experimentation, though that would undoubtedly help. Europeans still lag behind us in the study of social institutions, though they have shown a capacity to make use of American sociological methods without accepting all the illusions contained in American sociology. In this regard it is interesting to note that the country which is making the most progress in social reconstruction is Holland which is also making the most realistic effort to use social research as a tool in communal reconstruction. But in many other countries there is little information available, statistical or otherwise, about the structure and character of society.

III. Pessimism and the New Sense of Christian Social Responsibility

It is in this setting that one must see the development of new life and vitality and the growth of a sense of social responsibility in the Church in Europe. Whereas in America the spirit of Christian social concern springs in large part from the optimism which has characterized American thought, in Europe it has its origin in a recovery of the validity and necessity of the Christian witness in the face of deep social pessimism. The assurance of Christians today is based on their experience in the resistance movement—that in the midst of complete personal and social disaster they still have a message for people, a message which speaks not of false hopes but of true hopes, a message for now and for eternity.

Christian social thought on the continent today is radical and prophetic because it has begun to see the post-war crisis of Europe as God's continuing judgment on the churches, and the social order which they have implicitly sanctioned, and they have begun to sense how that judgment forces Christians to new repentance and new witness to Christian love and justice in society. They see the need to break through the traditional complacency of the church about the condition of the social order, to break down the wall between Christians and socialists, between the Church and the world, but a world which they now recognize was mistakenly called Christian. They have entered into a campaign against the ecclesiasticism which marks the established church in most countries of Europe, and which tends to make the church into an institution dominated by the clerics rather than a center of hope and creative life for a world in terrible distress.

This is the general pattern of thinking of those who, as a result of the upheaval of Europe and the breaking of its institutions have been able to emancipate themselves from old-fashioned pietism or indifference. But the picture is complicated because there are tendencies working in these

groups which threaten to divert them from the real task or to compromise their work. There is for example some tendency to try to find absolute or fool-proof solutions or formulas by which to express the Christian view. There is much pacifism among Christians in Europe today, particularly among youth in France and Germany. This pacifism is in part a legitimate and healthy expression of the Christian opposition to war but it is also a political pacifism which has its roots in the general belief that specific countries or Europe as a whole have little to gain and much to lose from another war. (It is a little disconcerting to a former pacifist like myself to find profound German theologians using the kind of arguments for pacifism which we in America with much less theological equipment had to overcome during the period before World War II.) In this connection I would especially like to speak about the theological roots for thinking about social ethics on the continent today, and in particular about the ambiguous contribution of Barth.

IV. Barth and Christian Social Concern

In the circumstances of political confusion and social pessimism Barth's thought has great relevance and also great appeal. We in America have perhaps tended to depreciate his importance. As a theologian he towers above his contemporaries in Europe in his ability to help Christians break through their traditional patterns of thinking about the Church and the social order. It is a fact that in most of those Christian groups where there is new thinking about Christian social concern Barth's thought is dominant. This can be explained as follows.

He provides a clear statement of the ultimate Christian hope which is not dependent on the exigencies of the social situation or the possibilities for men to change it. At the same time he shows the basis for understanding the worth of man and his ultimate victory over the powers of evil, a victory which in fact already has been

achieved by Christ and which is comprehensible to the faithful. In addition he has a positive attitude toward Marxism and this gives him wide popular appeal.

In countries where Barth's theology is combined with political realism and sociological sophistication, as for example in Holland, the result is a powerful support for social realism and bold action. But in those countries where this practical experience and knowledge is lacking the results are not so favorable. This is due to two factors in Barth's approach: his attitude to Christian ethics and his own opinions about particular social and political problems.

The favorite phrase of the Barthians is *hic et nunc*, and it signifies their desire to discover the meaning of the revelation for the decisions of the moment, the direct confrontation of the World by the Gospel. This approach seems to make unnecessary very much systematic thinking about social aims, the application of "Christian principles," etc. It is enough, Barth seems to say, that in thinking about the problems of the political order that the Church starts from the revelation of God. The choice of the concrete way is more or less assumed. To quote him, "Among the different political possibilities of today Christians will know how to make their way and to choose those whose realization seems to them clearly to be an analogy or a reflection of the contents of their faith and of their message." This advice when coupled with the belief that the Church "... is thus being very careful to avoid expressing one single political idea—even were it the democratic idea—as to the *Christian system* to the exclusion of all others," leads some of his followers to go to absurd lengths in their desire to avoid Christian principles or programs and to preserve the purity of a Christ-centered faith. Two years ago Prof. Jacques Ellul, a well-known French Barthian, wrote as follows: "There are indeed conflicts in our society, but they are illusory. Those who fight do so for illusions and sacrifice themselves for false

reasons. The political conflicts of today are not revolutionary, they are merely persons or teams in opposition to one another. . . . The Communist society rests upon the same essential postulates as capitalist society, and man is no more free on the one side than on the other. Everywhere in the world man is the slave of production, everywhere he is absorbed by the masses, everywhere justice is mocked, everywhere the same financial technique prevails and work is as inhuman in rationalized American factories as in Stakhanovism." And speaking of the Christian attempts to change the social structure of the world he writes, "No result can be obtained by a direct attack upon them or by an attempt to modify them in a spectacular way, with the object of rebuilding a world from the foundations." (Prof. Ellul is in practice better than his theory.) This view perhaps explains the social conservatism one frequently finds in Barthian circles. It may be taken as no more than the reflection of an extreme desire to avoid the danger of Christian political parties, etc., but it also reflects some oversimplified thinking as to how Christians are to approach social questions. It is too easy to assume that the solution to the ethical problems of society will be readily apparent to those who think about them from the standpoint of the divine revelation, and that fact-finding and investigations by sociologists and economists working together with theologians is irrelevant or unimportant. The tendency for European Barthians is to be brilliant in their statement of the ultimate dimensions of Christian faith but rather weak on the side of social analysis, so weak that they fall easy victims to some traditional theory of social change. For some it even leads to attempts to find direct guidance from the Bible for the specific problems of the modern world.

But besides this theological difficulty there is the confusion which is caused by Barth's own judgments about particular political issues. Perhaps Barth would agree that these judgments do not always reflect the content of faith and of the Christian

message. What then do they express? At this point a few of his followers admit that he is not a student of economics and politics and they agree that his statements are sometimes naïve.

His defenders will say that he is speaking only to specific groups and not to the world in general. Thus in his statements about East and West, Barth was addressing primarily the self-satisfied bourgeoisie of Switzerland. But given the kind of loyalty which he inspires in the majority of his followers and the attention which he commands in Europe generally, these statements are usually taken as the true prophetic word for today.

In recent months there have been some defections among his followers from his view that East and West are equally bad. Prof. Gollwitzer of Bonn has recently written a powerful statement on the Christian between East and West which, while condemning the West for the tendency to overlook its own sins, nevertheless rejects the view that these two systems are to be equated in their evil. "It would be false to draw the conclusion that East and West are equally godless: the practical atheism of the West and the theoretical atheism of the East, and that there is really nothing to choose between them, since at night all cats are grey; that the East has achieved social justice by suppressing personal freedom while the West has achieved personal freedom by sinning against social justice. This does not give a true picture of the difference. While the East has lost freedom it has really lost social justice also, which it originally professed to defend. The East has not fulfilled the original promise of socialism. It is not even moving in that direction, for it brings no justice or freedom to the oppressed. The whole course of transformation through which Socialism has passed from Marx via Lenin to Stalin can best be described by quoting direct an inhabitant of the Eastern zone: 'Today the working class here is the deadly enemy of Communism!' Our readiness to repent in the West cannot consist in forgetting or

belittling differences which still exist.”¹ Prof. Gollwitzer, though theologically a follower of Barth, has the advantage of an experience of four years in Russian prisoner of war camps from which he returned only recently.

Dr. Fritz Lieb of Basel, formerly a co-member with Barth of the Swiss-Russian friendship society and one of the strongest proponents of Russian Communism, has lately changed his mind about communism and has written a violent attack on the U.S.S.R. as the real enemy of the proletariat.

It should be pointed out that Lutherans also frequently have oversimplified the theological and ethical problems before the Church in the struggle between East and West. Some Germans have argued that in both East and West there is the “freedom of the gospel” which is to be distinguished from political freedom. Since the former freedom is the “essential” freedom, according to this view, East and West are on an equal level in the eyes of the Church. The valid motivation of this argument is to avoid identifying the Church with one side and also to maintain Christian fellowship with those in the East. But it leads to a questionable political judgment that the best way for the Christian to maintain this fellowship is to remain neutral in the political struggle.

V. Europe as the Third Way

Is it too cynical to suggest that the lofty view which many Christians on the continent hold regarding the sins of the East and West is to be attributed not to the purity of their Christian witness but to the understandable desire to avoid having to choose sides politically? The belief that through political neutrality Europe can escape another war is very widespread on the continent. Many Christians in Europe deplored the Toronto statement on Korea and argued that if it had to be made it should have contained strictly parallel

denunciations of North Korean aggression and the South Korean police state. In France many pastors signed the Stockholm appeal. While the great majority of people in Germany oppose Russian communism there is a widespread feeling that this is not their struggle.

Behind these views there is a considerable mixture of naïveté and nationalism, and also distrust of America as an ally militarily and otherwise. The idea of a neutral Europe, a third power, a third way out of the ideological conflict between East and West appeals particularly to the French, because of their intense national pride which finds its outlet today in making France the spearhead of a united Europe. For the greater part of the European people the unity of Europe is a means of survival and the only basis of a realistic self-defense which will probably depend heavily on the Atlantic pact. But for France European unity is the possibility to restore the political foundations of a great culture, the *génie française*. Americans must learn to appreciate how strongly the French and other Europeans feel about this. They do not want to be counted into the Atlantic camp so easily. They do not want to become an “Atlantic Europe” but a “Strasbourg Europe.” At the same time we may hope that they do not continue to oversimplify the struggle between East and West as a struggle between Russian and American ideologies.

There is not space here to go into all the problems of European unity and the Christian response. The Protestant churches have been slower than the Roman Catholics in comprehending the significance of this unity movement for their own future. But for the Catholics the issue is very simple; it is the struggle of Christian Europe against paganism. The Protestant churches are so conditioned by their national backgrounds that they will have to make a great effort to recognize their responsibility for the welfare of the larger European community. Already there have been successful exploratory talks between

¹ *Evangelische Theologie*, “The Christian Between East and West,” H. Gollwitzer, No. 4, 1950.

groups from the churches of Holland and France with Germany. Moreover many prominent Protestants are active in promoting the Council of Europe. Denis de Rougemont is director of the *Centre Européen de la Culture* and one of the leaders of the European movement. André Philip, a socialist, former finance minister in the French Government and a well-known Protestant, is perhaps the chief spokesman in France for European union. More than any other this movement has captured the enthusiasm and idealism of youth and others in Europe who see it as

the means to solve the economic problems of the continent and as a means to circumvent the frustrations of national politics which exist in so many of these countries today.

However the enthusiasm which is expressed for European unity is not so much an index of its possibility as of the desire of Europeans to raise themselves out of the hopelessness of their present situation. The Church has an important witness to make to those who see in it a cure-all for the difficulties and the frustrations of European life today.

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PROTESTANTISM AND THE BALLOT BOX

By DAVID S. BURGESS

Protestantism is still on the conservative side of the ballot box in America. Despite the labors of pulpit and seminary prophets to broaden and liberalize the social doctrines of the churches, a vast majority of Protestants vote the Republican ticket in the North, and in the one-party South are supporting Dixiecrats and Democrats of proven caution. This appalling gap between the social doctrines of church leaders and the persistent conservatism of laymen at the polling booths is disturbing to any Christian who believes that the members of the visible body of Christ should be more than mirrors of fashion or echoes of public opinion.

In the 1950 elections, the moralistic conservatism of American Protestantism was again exhibited. Here are a few concrete examples of a general trend. In a wealthy mid-western state a group of prominent Methodists campaigned for an incumbent Republican Governor because he had enforced the liquor laws. Other criteria of political worthiness were completely disregarded in their endorsement. In Ohio several Protestant leaders circulated letters reminding the citizens that many of the Democratic Party candidates were Catholics. The inference was as plain in 1950 as it was in the Smith-Hoover campaign of 1928: vote Republican, and save Ohio from the Pope. Other public questions were considered unworthy of mention. In Chicago the crime probe so outweighed the deeper question of public policy that in their eagerness to throw out a corrupt Democratic sheriff, a majority of Protestants helped to unseat four incumbent Democratic congressmen of proven liberalism and to elect in their places four Republicans whose loyalty to the business interests and to the *Tribune* never has been questioned. And in the defeats of Con-

gressmen Biemiller in Milwaukee, Jacobs in Indianapolis, and Burke in Toledo—to say nothing of Senators Tydings, Lucas, and Myers—similar cases of moralistic Protestantism in league with corporate business could be enumerated.

It is the same story in the South. Churchmen, both lay and ecclesiastical, get into politics when questions of liquor, crime, bingo or reform are raised. York County, South Carolina, where I now live, at present is the scene of a moral cleanup by well-meaning church folk. For several years the county has been dominated by a state senator whose honesty has been open to question but whose friendship to the working people has been well proven again and again by his votes in the state legislature. In an effort to break his power and regain control of the county, the business interests have been able to purge four incumbent state representatives and replace them with men who are outspokenly conservative. The deed was accomplished under the supposed leadership of a well-known Methodist layman, and under the smoke-screen of newspaper moralisms such as, "Clean Out the Court House," "Throw Out the Rats," "End the One-Man Dictatorship," and the like. But the men in the backroom calling the signals and directing the operation were not clergymen or saints, but hard-boiled business executives who are now in control of the county. The church people, poor and rich alike, voted for the new regime, but most of them, I believe, are completely unaware of the powers behind the scenes. A similar story could be found in almost every county and state of the South—the story of how politicians rise to power with the votes of church-attenders, while being under the control of business interests.

In order to save myself from despair about the shallow moralism of so many of my fellow churchmen, I have been forced to re-examine the reasons why the average Protestant votes for the more conservative candidate. Part of my questions were answered in Dr. R. H. Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*. My former seminary professors warned me that the book was too extreme, too condemnatory of the Protestant churches. All I can say is that it helped me understand what goes on in the mind of my fellow church member—the rich Presbyterian businessman in the next pew, who supposedly is my brother in Christ.

The thoughts in his mind started with Martin Luther. Though preaching personal charity, Luther recoiled from letting the state be an instrument of social charity. To him the state was a hard disciplinarian saving society from the chaos of anarchy. Then came the influence of Zwingli of Zurich, who caught the spirit of rising capitalism—salvation by hard work, the damnation of idleness. In Zurich, wandering travellers were given relief on the condition that they left town the next day; no inhabitant who wore ornaments or luxurious clothes, who failed to attend church or played cards or was otherwise disreputable was entitled to relief.¹ It was Calvin, however, who was most influential in moulding the political and economic habits of my fellow Presbyterian in the next pew. Though he attempted to curb the covetousness of the rising capitalists by a multitude of legal restrictions, Calvin nevertheless gave encouragement to the virtues of asceticism, thrift, and frugality which laid the basis for economic success. He created the Puritan mind, which in its secularized and debased form has become the mind-set of my Presbyterian businessman. My contemporary still belongs, in the words of R. H. Tawney, to

. . . those classes in society which combine economic independence, education and a

certain decent pride in their status, revealed at once in a determination to live their own lives, without truckling to their superiors, and in a somewhat arrogant contempt for those who, either through weakness of character or through economic helplessness, were less resolute, less vigorous and masterful than themselves.²

And the class of my Presbyterian friend could be described as not

. . . untouched with sober exaltation—an earnest, zealous, godly generation, scorning delights, punctual in labor, constant in prayer, thrifty and thriving, filled with decent pride in themselves in their calling, assured that strenuous toils are acceptable to Heaven.³

To him, the great spiritual enemy of man is not riches, but bad habits; not covetousness, but bad stewardship. His pride in his own accomplishments gives him a certain contempt of the less privileged. To him, the poor are not victims of economic circumstances or personal tragedies. They are victims rather of their own slothfulness. Truest charity, therefore, is not to ameliorate their present conditions, but to reform their slothful characters so that charity itself would be unnecessary. Such a doctrine, as Tawney points out, has converted severity toward the poor “from a sin into a duty” and has frozen “the impulse of natural pity with the assurance that, if indulged, it would perpetuate the suffering which it sought to allay.”⁴

This same attitude toward the less privileged has characterized the attack of the Republican Party and its Dixiecrat compatriots upon all New Deal measures since 1933. Programs of relief for the poor, pensions for the old, wage increases for the underpaid, payments for the farmers, were attacked as killers of initiative and debilitating to the recipients. This concern lest overkindness sap the manhood of the underprivileged is the chief worry of many upright, honest and enterprising Protestants. And it is often the controlling factor in their support of Congressmen and

¹ Tawney, R. H., *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, John Murray, Albemarle Street W, London, 1943, p. 114.

² *Ibid.*, p. 202.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

Senators who are pledged to vote against higher minimum wages, larger pensions, public housing, and general programs to help the underprivileged.

This program of studied negativism combined with the "Big-Lie" technique of McCarthy-ism was the stock-in-trade of most Republican candidates in 1950. Topping the Republican cake, however, was a series of moralisms which appealed to the reform-minded American. Senator Wiley, whose support by big business and whose hatred of the labor movement is well known in Wisconsin, campaigned on television against crime, vice and drunkenness. He smeared all Democratic candidates with the tar brush of corruption from Jersey City, to Chicago, to Kansas City and to points west. Hickenlooper of Iowa fought for Mother and the Flag in his speeches—and against crime. Taft fought criminals, especially left-wingers and radicals among union leaders. And Everett Dirksen of Illinois conducted a virtual political revival campaign in his war against criminals and Democrats. This smokescreen of moralisms, from the lips of men who were being financed by corporate interests, blinded most church-goers to the real domestic and foreign issues of the campaign. Yet a majority of churchmen voted for Wiley, Hickenlooper, Taft and Dirksen thinking that they were voting for genuine reform.

The basic fault in their voting habits is their inability to differentiate between the secondary and the primary moral issues of the campaign—between the mint and anise and cummin of the political fights and the weightier matters of the law—justice, mercy and faith.

They cannot differentiate because the average Protestant still accepts the adage that what is good for business is necessarily the best for the community. A reading of Lincoln Steffens's *Autobiography* should reveal the absolute falsity of this assumption, for in his detailed study of civic corruption in America, Steffens concluded that it was the seekers after special privilege who corrupted the body politic. These

seekers were usually respectable businessmen who wanted a special franchise, a special road or a special law passed for their benefit. By their bribes, their political contributions to candidates for public office, they helped to transform the "theoretically democratic government of the State and its cities into a plutocratic system which disserves the peoples and serves the seekers of privilege."⁵ Modern counterparts of this corruption were found in the Florida and North Carolina primaries this year. The exact amount of hard cash contributed by large corporations toward the defeat of Frank Graham and Claude Pepper will never be known. But it was used wisely to corrupt and twist the mind of the electorate, to buy votes, to control county court-house gangs. In the end, it was enough to purchase two senate seats for Big Business and set back the cause of liberalism in the South several years. The two new servants of special privilege, Senators Smith and Smathers, will serve their masters well in the days ahead. Yet the most shocking fact was that there was no outcry from the pulpit against the purchase of these seats in Washington. No Senator protested. No churchmen protested. And in the end the men were allowed to take their places in Washington.

Possibly, the fault lies in the fact that the typical Protestant, with secure income, is more interested in "good" government than in representative government. What he wants is surface reform—more business in government and less government in business, more efficiency and speed, less spending and duplication. But he shows little concern for the more basic problems of government—the problems of who runs the government, whom the congressman is supposed to represent other than the business interests, how the government can become more responsive to the needs of all the people. Reformers who are interested in these more fundamental problems are considered too radical, too visionary, too

⁵ Steffens, Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*, The Literary Guild, New York, 1931, p. 446.

impractical. But the average churchmen of the Protestant faith are more like the people of St. Louis who, according to Lincoln Steffens

were against bribery in the abstract and against corruption that involved police, vice and petty politicians. They backed reformers who attacked those petty evils, but when a true reformer like Joseph W. Folk

went on to discover that not only Ed Butler's garbage business but the franchises of public service corporations were linked up with garbage, gambling and prostitution, some of the good people turned against Folk. They had stock or friends who had stock in these companies, and so they could see that they did not belong with what they called the honest citizenry.⁶

Considering the narrowness of the layman's viewpoint, it is absolutely imperative that Protestant church leaders attempt to develop a body of social thought within the denominations on the more basic moral issues in politics and economics. Already the Roman Church, which has the advantage in America of having less of the employer group and more of the working-class group in its membership, has launched a vast program of social indoctrination among all classes. Unlike many Protestant denominations, the Church of Rome is not satisfied with finding bases of agreement between capital and labor. Instead, she is attempting to teach the body of Christian doctrine to all participants in the business and political worlds, to guide them in their worldly decisions. She is dealing, in some manner at least, with the deeper moral questions of property, race, labor, and political economy. She is attempting to bring back into the secularized world of politics and business the underlying assumption of medieval days that society is an organic unit with different groups, performing varying functions but for a common spiritual goal.

Quite naturally, we Protestants are skeptical of the ultimate aims of Catholi-

cism. Yet an overly critical attitude toward the Mother Church does not remedy the vacuum of social thought in our own churches. As matters now stand, American Protestantism, despite conferences in Cleveland, Detroit and elsewhere, can offer little guidance to business, labor or governmental groups in the formation of immediate policy or in the setting of ultimate goals.

Protestant churches, moreover, have done little to raise the level of public thinking at times when voters are honestly puzzled by the conflicting claims of political parties. Yet the level of public judgment cannot be raised unless groups within churches start thinking and praying about the deeper implications of the gospel as they apply to the world of business and politics. Such concerted thought and prayer, with the aid and inspiration of the Bible, will eventually produce a body of church pronouncements and doctrines which can be used as middle axioms and moral guides in the heat of future political battles.

The lack of such axioms was obvious in the defeat of Dr. Frank Graham of North Carolina. This great southern leader was the victim of a program of character assassination seldom equalled in the South. He was charged with being a friend of radicals and communists, and a "poor security risk" himself. The most effective attack against him was centered on the issue of race—with its overtones of social equality, race mongrelization, and the like. With the notable exception of Dr. Edwin McNeal Poteat, the Rev. Charles Jones, the Rev. Howard Wilkinson and a possible handful of other clergymen, no minister in the state attempted to counteract the torrent of deliberate lies heaped upon Dr. Graham. The church was silent on the central doctrine of racial brotherhood, silent about truth being right and calculated falsehoods wrong. Consequently, the supporters of Dr. Graham were left without a frame of Christian reference to which to appeal, and they were left with the simple but ineffective defense that Dr. Graham was, after all, a good man and a well-meaning humani-

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 397.

tarian. Because the church was silent in what appeared to be a conspiracy of silence, the religious liberals of the state were not able to rally together to prevent the defeat of this great southerner.

To say, as one minister said to me when I showed him some of the racial filth circulated against Graham, that the church should not enter into politics is to deny the responsibility of the church to society—its special responsibility to see that the truth is spoken even in politics, that the doctrine of brotherhood be known and practiced and not denied under the guise of “southern democracy,” “selected clientele” or “separate but equal” treatment.

In South Carolina the churches were silent also when Hugo Simms, the only liberal Congressman the Palmetto State had had for decades, went down to defeat in the primary under the torrent of lies about communism, Trumanism and corruption. It was the same story in the Middle-West as I can testify from personal experience. Here the people were allowed to vote their frustrations about high prices, their loved ones in Korea, their fears of large government and their hatred of so-called subversives—without words of positive guidance from the churches concerning the basic moral issues raised in the campaigns.

If the prophetic groups within the churches had been thinking and praying, if they could have spoken out in time, the results of the election might have been different. Left without religious guidance and counsel, many good Protestants were swept off their feet by friends of the corporations within the Republican Party who posed as reformers. These Protestants usually went into the fray on the wrong side—with the privileged, against the working people, against the labor unions, against the more progressive politicians who would have represented a larger public interest.

Once the church develops a more positive social doctrine, which it can apply to the political scene, Protestants will be able to differentiate between the real and the false issues, between superficial and genuine reformers. They will be able to examine the future Huey Longs and Adolph Hitlers who attempt to ride into power with the cry that they will throw the rats out of the court house, the state house or the White House. They will no longer be fooled by fancy brochures or smart television shows. They will want to know who are the business Santa Clauses pulling the strings and giving the commands to these alleged reformers. They will be the wiser for having a church with a social doctrine and a social outlook.

THOMAS MANN AND THE COLLAPSE OF BOURGEOIS HUMANISM

By ROBERT W. FLINT

The campaign of secular humanism in the United States has always been closely related to the running Catholic polemic against those two great creators of the modern mind, Rousseau and Descartes. Irving Babbitt's very forthright humanism involved a disreputable theological substitute for Christianity, a kind of quasi-Manichaeic dualism. Since Babbitt's most brilliant opponents in the Christian wing have carried the day in point of intellectual authority, prestige and mere survival power, it has fallen to men like Stephen Spender, Karl Jaspers, Erich Fromm and Thomas Mann to carry on the humanist tradition. And among these men Mann is unquestionably the most eloquent and sympathetic mind, as well as the senior pessimist. Mann's native Hanseatic Lübeckian ideals of middle-class uprightness and normalcy have always been severe, but they have served him well as a platform from which to cry the doom of his own age. It is, indeed, Mann's deep native commitment to the Protestant German bourgeois ethos that has made his witness to the decay of humanism unique in modern literature. Not that Babbitt was not as Protestant as Mann but that he was perceptibly less human. And nothing that Babbitt wrote will have the staying power of Mann's remarkable new novel.

Doctor Faustus is a profoundly moving and, in places, a superbly well written book. All of it is written by the hand of a seasoned entertainer and mystifier, intensely alive with intellectual curiosity, personal concern, and a refined technique at the height of its powers. In criticizing it I shall probably do Mann the occasional injustice of mistaking the opinion of one of his fictional characters for his own; my guide will have to be Mann's own essays on history, art and politics and all that is

implied in his writing exactly this sort of novel. For *Doctor Faustus* stands in the tradition of *Wilhelm Meister*, the didactic, dialectical novel of ideas. *Meister*, with its crowded detail, its rich sense of human possibility, crowns the German bourgeois novel; *Faustus*, bitter, elegiac, mystical and apocalyptic, built up on parody and caricature, wants to be its summing-up and epitaph. "Everything rushes and presses on, the world stands in the sign of the end. . . ." Never has Mann's gift for elegy on an overwhelming scale operated to better advantage. He draws his net of tragedy and despair ever tighter with a firmness not much less than Marlowe's, but with an elegiac delicacy wholly unique in German fiction of this epoch. The death of little Nepomuk at the end of *Faustus* is a sort of climax to the theme which dominates the famous early story, "Disorder and Early Sorrow." In *Faustus* Mann embodies an *ultimate* disorder and a *final* sorrow. Nepomuk, in Mann's scheme of things, is the equivalent of the blithe, instinctive humanism, the pure human light of intelligent innocence, which Germany seems to have lost for good. His death summarizes and concentrates the action of the novel, since he is the echo of whatever was healthy and heaven-sent in bourgeois humanist culture, the last love of the great musician Adrian Leverkühn who has bonded his soul to the devil in return for the power to express his last ironies, pleasures, horrors, despairs of his dying age. Confronted with the agony of Nepomuk in the last phase of spinal meningitis, the doctor, like everyone else in the novel at a time of crisis, reverts to his primitive Germanness and becomes "theological." "'Take him, scum, filth, excrement,' he (the doctor) shrieked and stepped away from me as though back to the Cross,

"Take his body. You have power over that. But you'll have to put up with leaving me his soul. . . ."

Admittedly "touched" as he is and only a parody of a true healer, the doctor illustrates in this speech the difference between Mann's version of the Faust story and the medieval version. Leverkühn, Nepomuk, and the others comprise together in their tragic fragmentation the Faustian culture whose end Mann relentlessly bodies forth, yet for all of them there is some sort of mystical, paradoxical, gnostic salvation prepared. The mere grace with which Leverkühn mocks and parodies Germany's past and present, its solemn and somewhat humorless humanism (there is no hilarity of goodness in this novel; only the exasperated laugh), and the elegance and humor with which he fits the most comically grisly episodes of the medieval *Gesta Romanorum* to a puppet-play, or composes an Apocalypse to end all apocalypses, are signs of his "salvation" and the power his personal distinction has over the humanist narrator, the scholar Serenus Zeitblom. Zeitblom is paradoxically loyal to his somber friend, and Leverkühn is understandably often bored with Zeitblom. The types are both too much off-center to live in the round, but they serve Mann's purposes admirably. Rather than leave the reader to decide between two opposed and limited points of view, Mann usually takes things into his own hands and lets them state his editorial position antiphonally, dividing topics between them according to their gifts and capacities.

Before passing to a brief critique which the mere existence of an accomplished novel preaching almost total despair invites, I must add a note of admiration for the symbolic, dialectical and musical consistency which Mann has given his complex material. No novel has used the method of analogy with more skill. Mann's customary equation between art and disease and (true) life and disease, familiar to readers of *The Magic Mountain*, is considerably deepened. Disease and physical disorder now mark, at every point, the

boundaries of the spiritually feasible. Suffering is carefully dealt out to those who can make the best use of it; so many hours of creativity for so many knife-like pains. Mann follows the progress of Evil in the modern world with the intense sympathy of the old practitioner. When he ends a grueling chapter with passages like the following: ". . . and I left, really unnerved, half angry, half sorry, and went through the silent empty streets to my quarters."—or: "A lonely man folds his hands and speaks: 'God be merciful to thy poor soul, my friend, my Fatherland.'"—the critic is almost coerced into silence by the weight of genuine feeling and massive historical reality which lies behind the words.

Yet, to speak crudely, this novel like all fiction whatsoever, and especially all tendentious fiction, is "rigged." There is always the possibility that the justice which Mann seeks to do to the tensions of modern life may be more verbal and ideological than real, and that his lines of distinction between the human and the demonic, the German and the universal, the past and present, may be drawn somewhat on the bias of what the serious Christian would call the true line of cleavage. Like Wagner before him, Mann is true to nothing so much as his literary and "musical" ideals—to put on a good show. As for the apocalypse, he has the newspaper facts apparently on his side, as did W. H. Auden in his secular-humanist phase, when each poem seemed to be a telegram out of the imminent jaws of hell. But on the upper levels of culture and thought, we can see him making certain palpable errors of judgment and fact. Let me try to outline a few of these briefly:

Politics: In criticizing the Munich group of political opportunists who read and approved Sorel's *Réflexions sur la violence*, Zeitblom claims that he agreed with all their analyses and prognostications but that he wished they might have made them with more ethical passion and less complacency. This episode, I think, reveals the opacity and virtual non-existence of political intel-

ligence in the book. Ethical feeling is thought of here as a sort of sentiment, or emotional medication, applied after the dirty work has been done. That ethical feeling, like religious feeling, is itself a way of looking at things, judging men and circumstances, and taking stock of the future, does not occur to Zeitblom. As in the writings of certain American prophets of doom whom it would be superfluous to name, one assumes that the worst conceivable is true, and then casts about for some remedy, usually as extreme as the diagnosis. I submit that this is a literary strength rather than a facet of true ethical and political intelligence. The ideal of justice as a potentially heroic ideal in itself, essential for true health, does not play a part in Mann's dialectic. The best he could say for it in a recent essay on Nietzsche was that it is, after all, "not banal." Peace as a part of the moral law in the Kantian sense is little more than a *réflexion-tardive* to Zeitblom and his associates.

But Mann sees with an amused clairvoyance Germany's past commitments to such idols of the tribe as "noble brutality" and "respectable mischief-making." I don't wish to castigate him as a moral slacker, which he manifestly is not. I merely want to point him out as a helpless representative of a culture for which the distinctively political idealisms and heroisms which have marked the great phases of our own modern history have not been a major option. The Socialist Christianity of Paul Tillich which we now know to have been probably the soundest gospel in post-war Germany is dismissed by Mann as too lacking in glamor. The whole issue of Socialism is more or less brushed off as a question of "utilitarianism"—until the time when one *has* to choose—between the dictatorship of the proletariat or the dictatorship of "the scum of the earth."

Art: Doctor Faustus is one of a series of Mann's *Künstlerromane*, novels about artists. Critics who have compared Leverkühn unfavorably with more rounded and human characters like Pierre in *War and Peace* have missed the point. For Lever-

kühn is openly and admittedly a fabulous figure, the vehicle of a fable, whose belated turn toward human love and the "human" at the end of the story is supposed to be tragically pathetic and abortive. He is a composite of Nietzsche (some of whose letters are excerpted), Mahler, Schönberg, with motifs from the life and work of Scriabin, Prokofieff, Stravinsky, Picasso, Hindemith, and others. Mann's thesis could best be described a loving damnation of modern art. Could the love have been more perfect, the damnation might have been less equivocal and severe. In a revealing moment Leverkühn meditates on what the art of the future may be like, and conceives it as once more the "servant" of some kind of community like the medieval Church. But the conception of servitude, again, is pagan and absolutist, rather than Christian and republican. For future art is to be "an art without anguish, harmless, psychologically healthy." This, I am sure, music has never been and will never be. This is a caricature of its denatured state during the era of bourgeois sentimental, late 19th century hymnology, rather than an account of the intensely poignant and "harmful" (insofar as any true representation of the depth and tragedy of life is harmful) music of the Church from Ambrose to Mozart. And Zeitblom, recognizing this denatured ideal of Leverkühn's as a sentimental distortion, answers him with one of his own; namely, that art is of the "mind" and something apart from "man." Mann has defined sainthood in his Nietzsche essay as doing everything which one does not want to do and not doing anything which one wants to do. One need not look hard to see the ghost of Kant lurking behind this definition. I would call Mann's whole cerebral attitude toward art a form of post-Kantian gnosticism. Mann's efforts to conjure up a fictional life-work for his hero are heroic but seem to me to fall a good deal short of the reality. I just do not see the real outlines of modern art amidst what Mann, speaking candidly, calls "the bombast of despair." Even so, one must not drive this point too far. Mann has one critic of an

early piece by Leverkühn call him "God-witted" in spite of the mockery, and one can hear in all the baroque extravagance, the heavy intellectuality and pomposity of Leverkühn's later work, at least an echo of the actual "human" leaven which works in all great modern art.

Religion: It is not hostility to religion as much as the effort to appropriate certain selected parts of it to a "higher" humanist view of reality which one must watch out for in this novel. Religion for Mann, as for Hegel, is a field in which opposites posit each other. Goethe's Faust throws theology out the window in the first act and the devil follows not long after. But Mann's devil is more than the Spirit who Denies. Like Dostoevsky's devil he is the bad side of his interlocutor, though not so cringing, more of an actor than a poor relation. In Mann I am glad to see that he embodies some of that *chic* in the new popular religiosity of the Chestertonian variety which plays with paradoxes like counters in a parlor game. Altogether, Mann's devil may be said to work in an aesthetic-gnostic crux of meaning rather than the traditional moral-religious crux. He offers the only *pure* inspiration, disease as a release from dull respectability, claiming that passion is involved only with the ambiguous and questionable, and that true passion concerns only the absolutely questionable. "A capacity for sin so healless that it makes a man despair from his heart of redemption—that is the true theological way to salvation." So Leverkühn thinks that mixing extreme pride with extreme contrition he may make himself interesting to God. But this Prodigal Son never goes home and never desires to. The confusion at the top level of Mann's fable of doom is traceable partly, I believe, to the catastrophe at the bottom—for Mann intends Leverkühn to represent Germany itself, as well as Modern Art, the prideful, creative

element in Germany. The too-great rigor of his analogical naturalism, and an over-strict parallel between the fate of groups and the quality of persons, makes him muff the distinction between the salvation of individuals and the behavior of nations. His ultimate hope-beyond-hope, then, cannot summon up a vision of a substantial Gestalt of grace, to use Tillich's phrase, but only the high G of a cello, pianissimo-fermata, which "abides as a light in the night." (This after Leverkühn has "taken back" Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with a Lament of *Doctor Faustus* to end all laments.)

These are all serious reservations against *Doctor Faustus* as a chart for modern thought. This reader often longed for the complacent sophomoric good humor with which Joyce occasionally handled these same explosive realities. Somehow the Principle of Sufficient Reason must remain a part of God's nature and action in history. No conceptual raids on history as arrogant and demanding as Mann's and the tradition he speaks for can meet a better success. But if one reads this book for just what it is, the fable of "A music-lover who has tired of romantic democracy and popular moral harangues . . ." and who swings to another extreme, well past the saving mean, it can be an illuminating experience. It gives out a cold fire but a very bright one.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Flint sent the following postscript which may interest readers of his article: "I feel somewhat nervous about my piece, like a very early Christian, perhaps, who has just tried to topple a statue of Jupiter Capitolinus to the dismay of his coreligionists. But after all, the Stature of Thomas Mann (to quote the title of a recent very bad and dull book) apart from the Craft of T.M., is an unreasonable idol. But it is a *real* idol. One need only look into R. P. Blackmur's essay on the same book in the Kenyon Review. I regret putting so much literary talk into the essay, but the reader must realize that it is a powerful and affecting book—that rhetoric still has an equal power for good and evil, as in Plato's time."

BOOK REVIEWS

CHRISTIANITY AND HISTORY. By Herbert Butterfield. New York: Charles Scribner and Son, 1950. 146 pp. \$2.75.

In a period in which numerous books on the relation of Christianity and history quite properly appear, it is nevertheless refreshing to find a writer who combines important but neglected material with distinctive nuances of Christian meaning. The contribution stems out of the fact that Professor Butterfield, who teaches modern history at Cambridge, is professionally an historian who is a Christian, rather than vocationally a theologian who also studies history. As a result, he sees many aspects from a very suggestive angle of vision. His general position is so close to the members of the Fellowship that it is superfluous to state it.

Professor Butterfield has great appreciation for the achievements of nineteenth century historical scholarship, particularly in that its concern to deal with the actual documents of previous periods led to totally new reconstructions of the life of past periods. He is equally clear that the documents do not interpret themselves, and that historical work involves insight, sympathy, imagination and elasticity of mind. Precisely this function means that the interpretation of history is also always religious, since man brings his whole understanding of life to bear on what he sees.

The author's judgment on the nineteenth century mind is based on historical as well as theological grounds. That mind is frankly out of gear with the rest of history, in which the same human problems always re-appear. Those who are influenced only by it are thus incapacitated for understanding the past or seeing the problems of our time (pp. 69-71). Pushing behind the nineteenth century into the eighteenth, Professor Butterfield finds a great discrepancy between the theoretical work on the perfectability of man and the

scientific diplomacy of the period in its concern to balance power and ethics. He finds that the latter expresses the abiding human problem of self-righteousness and sin in individual and collective terms.

The only answer to the untruth of the nineteenth century and to the despair of most of history, Professor Butterfield finds in the providential understanding of history as grounded in Christianity. From such a framework, fanaticism, complacency, and despair can be avoided because the human scene is accepted as the arena in which men wrestle with the ageless recurring problems from a faith beyond it. This faith, however, is not to be identified with the history of the church—which he does not defend—but with a dimension to which it nevertheless testifies.

Many other aspects of history are explored in this excellent volume. The more important include the factor of complexity in history, myth as an elastic pattern which can be applied in various forms, and the nature of the historical in the Bible and in such historians as Ranke, Acton, and Carlyle.

JOHN DILLENBERGER

CATHOLIC RADICALISM. By Peter Maurin. New York: Catholic Worker Books, 1949. xi, 214 pp. \$1.00.

The writings of Peter Maurin for the *Catholic Worker* have been gathered in this paper-bound volume which offers an abundance of reading for a low price. To make the bargain even better, the book is deliberately not copyrighted, in order that it may be quoted as freely as anyone wishes. And much of it is quotable.

Peter Maurin, who died in May, 1949, combined loyalty to the Roman Catholic church and some of its basic conceptions with a heterodox sectarian radicalism. (One selection starts:

I was once thrown out
of a Knights of Columbus meeting
because, as the K. of C. official said,
I was radical.)

Maurin sometimes summed up his philosophy in the three C's: cult, culture, cultivation. These three were represented respectively by the church, folk schools and folk education, and an agrarian ideal ("the green revolution"). Among the variety of things endorsed in the book are voluntary poverty, practice of works of mercy, pacifism, Roman Catholic rejection of birth control, race equality, the authority of the church.

Maurin's is a frankly utopian ethic. But it is neither the "hard" nor the "soft" utopianism (of Niebuhr's analysis) which have wrought such havoc in our time. It is rather a sectarian type of utopianism which aims not so much at political objectives as at creation of Christian communities whose influence will permeate society. Whatever such utopianism may lack, we may hope that there will always be some of its ferment in our society. Maurin wished to proceed through establishment of farming communes, combining communal ownership and cultivation of the soil with some private ownership and close family life. Peter Maurin loved freedom too much to be a collectivist; and he loved mankind too much to be a rugged individualist.

Much of the appeal of these "phrased essays" is in their style, which can be shown only by quotation:

"The bourgeois capitalist believes in rugged individualism; The Bolshevik Socialist believes in rugged collectivism. There is no difference between the rugged individualism of bourgeois capitalism and the rugged collectivism of Bolshevik Socialism. The bourgeois capitalist tries to keep what he has, and tries to get what the other fellow has.

The Bolshevik Socialist tries to get what the bourgeois capitalist has. The Bolshevik Socialist is the son of the bourgeois capitalist, and the son is too much like his father. All the sins of the father are found in the son."

ROGER L. SHINN

MAIN CURRENTS IN MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT. By John H. Hollowell. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1950. 759 pp.

This book is a history of modern political theory presented from the Christian perspective. In this rare approach lies its uniqueness and significance. This approach is one that focuses attention primarily on the theological presuppositions underlying recent political thinking and evaluates the content of various theories from the Christian point of view. This evaluation is supplemented in the closing sections of the book by a presentation of what Christianity has to say about the social and political order.

In broad outline, the book considers the theorists who have formed the broad currents of liberalism, socialism, and the revolt against reason and values exemplified most catastrophically in fascism. More succinctly, however, it is the story of the tragedy into which modern man sinks when he cuts himself loose from the Christian faith and makes gods out of nature, historical process, humanity, Reason, Instinct, the state, social movements, the Stalins and Hitlers with which we are plagued, or just himself. In discussing liberalism, Professor Hollowell makes a distinction between political liberalism as a struggle for freedom against arbitrary governmental power, and liberalism as a view of man and the universe. It is the faulty presuppositions of its view of man and history, Hollowell insists, which have brought about its failures as a political force. For what made

political liberalism ineffective was its insistence on the autonomy of human reason, belief in the goodness and moral perfectibility of man, almost exclusive identification of evil with ignorance and faulty social institutions, and faith in history as possessing within itself an inevitable progress towards social redemption.

While differentiating democratic brands of socialism from the more doctrinaire Marxist manifestations, Hallowell correctly points out that most socialist thought rests on the same faulty presuppositions about man and history found in liberalism. Both Utopian Socialism and Marxism start with belief in the autonomy of reason, consider human nature basically good and morally perfectable, find evil due only to the institutions of private property, and foolishly imagine that with the abolition of private ownership, history will progress into a Utopia without conflict or exploitation. The terrible consequences that result in modern communism from these defective presuppositions now threaten the entire democratic world. For when the abolition of capitalistic institutions does not result in the elimination of evil from society, communism strives to achieve the harmony of its dream by a tyrannical unification of all life through a dictatorship which suppresses all difference and opposition. At the same time, having denied the existence of transcendent ideals, communism possesses no norm by which its social structure may be judged—and so identifies the tyrannical unification its dictatorship imposes with the perfect harmony that, according to its theory, is supposed to result spontaneously and without coercion. How great the tyranny is into which the Marxist dream has degenerated, Professor Hallowell points out in a chapter on the Soviet Union, which is the most concise indictment of the inequalities and injustices of Russian communism that has appeared in recent literature.

The third main current of modernism, the revolt against liberalism and reason, entitled "The Revolution of Nihilism." Under this section Hallowell includes the

rise of irrationality in recent psychological, sociological, and philosophical theories; the theorists of nationalism, imperialism, and racial superiority; and fascism. He sees fascism as the inevitable result of modern culture's "repudiation of reason, justice and God." When man "denies that there is any objective reality to which he must submit" and insists God or reason has no claim on him, there is no ethical standard left with which to judge the use of power in society, men lack adequate values by which to judge and oppose the evils of totalitarianism—and so force alone becomes the arbiter of what is true and right.

In evaluating the various social theorists who fall into the broad categories of liberalism, socialism, and fascism, the author quotes extensively from works of many members of Frontier Fellowship including Drs. Tillich, Niebuhr, and Bennett. In the closing sections of the book, in examining "Christianity and the Social Order," he uses Walter Rauschenbusch to illustrate liberal Protestantism; Dr. Niebuhr, Protestant Neo-Orthodoxy; the late Archbishop Temple, Anglicanism; and the papal encyclicals, Roman Catholicism. While, perhaps unfortunately, Hallowell does not make any comprehensive statement of his own political philosophy, he declares that "the basic truths of the Christian faith provide the best insights we have into the nature of man and of the crisis in which we find ourselves," and calls upon modern man to construct the sort of society that will be "God-centered rather than man-centered." By doing so, he insists, "we will not in this way eliminate our problems but we will have the spiritual and intellectual resources with which better to understand those problems and to grapple with them."

DON McKEE

THE KINGDOM WITHOUT END. By Robert E. Fitch. New York: Scribners, 1950. xiv, 137 pp. \$2.50.

This book is an extended commentary on two verses in Jeremiah:

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the

mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercises loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.
(Jeremiah 9:23-4)

The author rightly recognizes that these verses provide a framework on which to build a telling analysis of the shortcomings of our contemporary world, of the kingdoms which have an end, and likewise of the continuous creative activity of God, in His gift of the Kingdom which has no end. The writer attempts to combine in synoptic view an analysis which will meet the empirical test of agreement with the facts as we find them verified in our experience, and which will also be in accord with the main insights of the Hebrew prophetic tradition. There is thus a combination of incisive analysis, prophetic exhortation and confession of faith.

An opening chapter discussing "The Living God," the God who is the Lord of history, and deals with the problems created for this view by such facts as human freedom, evil, sin and suffering. The last chapter deals with "The Kingdom Without End," and the way in which it outlasts the kingdoms of this world. In between these chapters, which proportionally occupy less than a third of the book, are four chapters dealing with the specific types of pride which Jeremiah catalogues, and also with the subtlest and most deadly form of pride, which is spiritual. Dr. Fitch has an incisive pen, and in these chapters in particular, it cuts deep. He provides a devastating analysis of the pitfalls of the pride of power, the pride of possessions, the pride of intellect and the pride of the humble. He sets his remarks in the context of various Biblical myths and stories, interweaving them in a highly skillful manner.

Dr. Fitch has quite obviously trod a long path of spiritual pilgrimage—from John Dewey to Reinhold Niebuhr. Although the geographical distance may be no more than the width of Broadway, the spiritual

distance is great, and those who side with the former teacher will feel that the abdication of the pupil has been complete, while those who side with the latter will hope that better things are yet to come. For it must be noticed that the middle section of the book, which exposes our forms of pride, is of a much higher order than the first and last chapters, which attempt to describe the Kingdom wherein men worship not themselves, but glory rather in the Lord. The kingdoms which have an end, which we are to shun, are etched for us much more clearly than the Kingdom without end, to which we are to cleave. The description, for example, of the things in which God delights (pp. 124-129) is certainly high prose, but it is description in extremely generalized terms. This is partly, in the nature of the case, unavoidable, for part of the lure of the kingdoms which have an end is that they are so tangible, so definite, in comparison with the Kingdom without end. This being so, perhaps the balance of the book needs redressing. The disproportionate amount of space given to the subordinate hypotheses of the inadequacy of humanistic faith (Ch. II-V), in comparison with the alleged central thesis of God's creative activity (Ch. I and VI), may not have been wholly fortunate. The book, in other words, is long on analysis of our ills, and short on the explication of the constructive alternative to our predicament, to be found in allegiance to the Kingdom without end.

Having said this, one must immediately call attention to Dr. Fitch's commendable wisdom in pointing out that he is not trying to present a total Christian philosophy of history (cf. pp. xi and 113, for example). But we are at least entitled to raise a question about this sort of proportion. It could be said, on the one hand, that we need all of the devastating analyses we can get, to push our generation into an acknowledgment of its spiritual and moral bankruptcy; if a book can achieve that negative end, well and good; demand no more. On the other hand, it could also be said that we have had a considerable number of Pene-

trating Analyses of our Predicament in the last ten years, and that it may be time now to take some of this for granted, or at least to deal with it more incidentally, and gird our resources to deal with the positive message which the Christian faith must offer for our times, to elaborate in as much fullness, and with as much wisdom, as we can, the faith in the Kingdom without end which must supplant the kingdoms which do not last.

However, at a time when more and more people are blaming our ills on the "Reds" or the "pagans" or the Democrats, it is an essential propaedeutic to remind us that the source of our problem lies within ourselves and not just with our opponents. Dr. Fitch has done this job admirably, and he has sketched, albeit in too brief form, the beginnings of a way to deal with the situation once it has been recognized. It is to be presumed that Dr. Fitch has some more books up his sleeve, and it is to be hoped that when his next one is unveiled we will find in it as clear a dealing with our tasks and obligations as this book gives us of our failings.

ROBERT McAFEE BROWN

THE MATURE MIND. By H. A. Overstreet. New York: W. W. Norton, 1949.

The post-war non-fiction best seller list has been eloquent in its answers for all those who are insecure, immature, or just plain scared! So many of the books are attempting to provide men and women with their panaceas for meeting an unpleasant era. Too many of these unfortunately are escapist, via a religio-psychological means, or merely through hilarity. *The Seven Storey Mountain* and others of this kind give a device of navel contemplating; the twins of the *Zoo* pictures provide the hilarious. There are also, however, some quite sensible, worthy, thought provoking books which appear on this list even today. Such a book is Overstreet's *The Mature Mind*.

Overstreet makes an appeal to the secular mind. He is anxious to point out that

many of the abuses so feared and disliked by truly liberal people are merely the results of immaturity. Thus he suggests that much of the bitter antagonism to trade unionism is just the result of childishness. Bitter racist views are, for him, born of an adolescent desire to maintain the position of King of the Hill. The attitudes of distrust and fear which motivate much of our international thinking are bred in an atmosphere of being unable to meet life as adults. And so on and on. . . .

There is much to be said for the argument, as he states it. Surely a psychological analysis of most of the warmongers or racists can be developed to point out their basic insecurities. And there is some real value in being able to show that mature people should not make immature decisions without considerations of objective facts. But is it not also true that our playing with psychology today has merely given a slight shift of the mentality. In the "old days" it was ignorance which made men do the thing which was not right or good or moral; nowadays we point out that it is simply immaturity. Hence, *grow up*, and all men will act right and be decent.

This attitude of Overstreet's is quite well pointed up in his argument in the chapter on religion. Here he develops his thoughts on the basis of a quite fundamental consideration, namely the Augustinian-Pelagian controversy. In the manner of a man who does not know, he claims that Augustine's whole argument simply stemmed from his own uncontrollable lustfulness. But a professor of philosophy at a great university should be a little more profound than that. Overstreet feels that if Augustine had not fathered an illegitimate child the whole course of Christian history would have gone along Pelagian lines. In a sense this is surely understandable—from his point of view. Pelagius is surely the teacher of those who feel we will act right when we *know* the right thing to do, and when we are *mature* enough.

Nonetheless, there is some value in this book. It may make some people waken to the fact that many of the attitudes they have *are* really the result of immaturity. And since in this psychoanalyzing age of ours no one wants to be considered immature, some improvement of attitude may result. And then on to Damascus, or even to Hippo!

ADOLPH BEHRENBURG

SWEDEN: MODEL FOR THE WORLD.

By Hudson Strobe. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1949.

In the midst of the debate of pros-cons, cans-can'ts, goods-bads, it is a comfort to know of some who have accomplished the very things that truly liberal people are talking about. Sweden has. Hudson Strobe writes a reportorial account of just what has been done and what is being done constantly in this little country. He has travelled there extensively with all of the right letters of introduction to the people who are in the know. No doubt he went with prejudices in favor of this "middle way," but apparently he came away with deeper prejudices of respect and admiration. So he has written his story in the mode of the Gunther "inside" accounts, and he has done it well.

Some years ago an account of Sweden was given in which the author called the great social experiments there "the middle way." This was in the time when the debate over collectivism, the Soviet Union, socialism, and communism had a considerably different twist. In some ways the debate then was much less complicated and consequently more honorable. Then those who hated the Soviet experiment could, or some were forced to, admit that they hated any reform or change or improvement of the capitalistic status quo. Now these same people with the same views can cloak their objections with the screen of liberty-loving phrases. Whereas decent men and women fear the Soviet experiment because

of its constantly enlarging tyrannic controls and expansive nationalism, they still can appreciate whatever is of democratic origin or motivation. Hence the debate has taken such a considerably different turn in the last fifteen years that a new book on Sweden can be valuable.

Strobe really merely enunciates what many travelers in Sweden would like to have known in America. He points out that the Swedish people are free, liberty-loving, democratic, but that they are not capitalistic. They can go to the cinema, walk down the streets as they wish, vote as they desire—but there are no slums. Great factories are being built everywhere in this country to expand industrial facilities and lift the standard of living, but the ownership of this industrial machine is not restricted to those who have put up the Kroner. Workers submit to discipline in the factories, yet they have a great sense of responsibility to the industry which is striving constantly to lift their standards of living. Men and women everywhere are proud of the achievements of their country, although there remain some who would turn left or right—and these can speak their minds.

Here is that middle ground, that model for the world. Here is the place where collectivism has not destroyed freedom or liberty. The opponents of any such scheme will always hastily point out the homogeneity of the people, the small size of the country, the climate, location, or anything they can think of to prove that it wouldn't work in America. They refuse to remember the wealth, the ingenuity, the know-how, the abilities of America and Americans, which would certainly offset any handicap of lack of homogeneity of population, the great size, etc., which may seem to indicate our inability to achieve such a healthy middle ground. But Sweden still stands before us as the model of what can, and should, be achieved in a living democracy.

ADOLPH BEHRENBURG

Foreign Are the Loveless

Foreign are the loveless to any reign
In sphere except remorse which is the heart's
Eternal ice: its wilderness of pain
Then, sorrowfully, the love of God departs.
For living thought of grief within the tomb
Of self: an inner desert of despair
Forever one, by utter strength of doom,
With bitterness, and humiliation bare.
With the victim of his poisoned will,
Will the weapon of an evil mind;
His heart despoiler of his reason's skill,
Reason tyrant to a heart that's blind?
Pity this state of clever-sickened head
That wishes it, and all the world, were dead!

R. A. LANDOR

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